

ORDINANCE NO. 5425

AN ORDINANCE Approving and Authorizing the Temporary Closure of the Unit Block of King Street and the Northern Portion of the Strand to Vehicular Traffic

WHEREAS, the unit block of King Street, between Union Street and the Strand, is a one-way street heading west toward the King Street Metro Station with several restaurants; and

WHEREAS, the northern portion of the Strand, between Wales Alley and King Street, is a two-way street heading north towards the Marina and south towards Jones Point Park; and

WHEREAS, prior to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic (“the pandemic”), many of the restaurants participated in the City’s outdoor dining program that allowed restaurant seating on the sidewalk; and

WHEREAS, in 2012, the City Council adopted the [Waterfront Small Area Plan](#), which recommends closing the unit block and the Strand north of the parking garage entrance to traffic (except EMS, fire, police, etc.) to make a pedestrian plaza; and

WHEREAS, in 2019, the City Council directed staff to develop a pilot program to test closing the 100 block of King Street to vehicular traffic; and

WHEREAS, in 2021, the City Council approved the permanent closure of the 100 block of King Street to vehicular traffic to allow for additional space for pedestrians and for businesses to expand their operations outdoors; and

WHEREAS, the 100 block closure provides additional pedestrian space and outdoor dining area that is beneficial to the waterfront area, while the traffic circulation in this area is not dependent on keeping this block open to vehicles; and

WHEREAS, City staff will work together with the Old Town Business Association on the unit block of King Street and the northern portion of the Strand to make better use of the public space, meet public safety requirements, and provide opportunities for continued outdoor dining and retail activities; and

WHEREAS, City Staff will evaluate the benefits and impacts of this temporary closure and will return to City Council in the Fall of 2022 with a recommendation to make this closure permanent if deemed desirable; and

WHEREAS, on February 15, 2022, the Waterfront Commission endorsed the temporary closure of the unit block of King Street and the northern portion of the Strand to vehicular traffic as consistent with the Waterfront Small Area Plan; and

WHEREAS, on February 28, 2022, the Traffic and Parking Board reviewed and made a recommendation to support the temporary closure of the unit block of King Street and the northern portion of the Strand to vehicular traffic based on the reasons provided herein; and

WHEREAS, on April 7, 2022, the Planning Commission found that temporary closure of the block to vehicular traffic was consistent with the City of Alexandria Master Plan; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to City Charter § 2.03(a) and Code of Virginia § 15.2-2006, the City has the authority to close streets and alleys; and

WHEREAS, the City has complied with the legal requirements in order to temporarily close this block to vehicular traffic; and

WHEREAS, in consideration of the findings of Waterfront Commission, Planning Commission, Traffic and Parking Board, and the report of the staff, the City Council of the City of Alexandria, has determined that the temporary closure of unit block of King Street and the northern portion of the Strand to vehicular traffic is desirable; therefore,

THE CITY COUNCIL OF ALEXANDRIA HEREBY ORDAINS:

Section 1. That, pursuant to City Charter § 2.03(a) and Code of Virginia § 15.2-2006, temporary closure of the unit block of King Street, located between Union Street and the Strand, and the northern portion of the Strand, located between Wales Alley and King Street to vehicular traffic through November 20 to conduct a pilot project is approved.

Section 2. That the city manager be, and hereby is, authorized to do on behalf of the City of Alexandria all things necessary or desirable to carry into effect this closure, including the execution of documents.

Section 3. That the city clerk be, and hereby is, authorized to attest the execution by the city manager of all documents necessary or desirable to carry into effect this closure, and to affix thereon the official seal of the City of Alexandria, Virginia.

Section 4. That this ordinance shall be effective at the time of its final passage and shall expire on October 4, 2022.

JUSTIN M. WILSON
Mayor

Final Passage: April 23, 2022